

**LEAP Alliance Monthly Program**

**Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Research and New Resources Available**

**November 8, 2017  
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm**

7:00 pm - 7:30 pm **Call to Order and LEAP Business Meeting**

* The Executive Committee had a vacant position for Secretary. We received nominations from the floor and voted. Michele Leffler was elected. Michele was a substitute teacher for LCPS for 10 years, former PTA President, current PTA VP of Events, and works part time as a Marketing Manager/Community Outreach for East Gate Orthodontics. Mom to half day kindergartener, Corinne, and second grader, Maddie.
* Introduction to the LEAP wiki. Please find it at <https://loudouneducationalliance.wikispaces.com/Welcome+%26+Getting+Started+Guide> and begin to contribute your questions and answers!
* Review of bylaws. Our bylaws require us to use Robert’s Rules of Orders. They are new to most people in the room. If there is a parliamentarian who would like to volunteer to help us with them, please step forward.

7:30 pm - 8:00 pm **Student Mental Health and Return to School - plus Incredible Resources**

We learned in our first meeting of the year that approximately 50% of students who need mental health services are not receiving them. As you may have seen in the news last week, Fairfax County surveyed their students and is alarmed at the results. There is world-class research available at the National Institutes of Mental Health and there are options for free treatment for students that have been fully funded by our government. Neil McNerney, licensed counselor, community leader, and author presented and information about free treatment options from the National Institute of Mental Health were provided.

Neil McNerney is a Licensed Counselor, Community Leader, & Author. Neil provides trainings and seminars at the local, state, and national level on topics of parenting, family systems, and counseling techniques. He has provided keynote addresses at state conferences in Virginia and North Carolina. Neil serves on the Loudoun County Community Services Board, which advises the County on mental health, substance abuse, and developmental services. Neil has worked with children and families for over 25 years in private practice in Reston and Leesburg, VA. In addition, he serves on the faculty of the Virginia Tech Graduate School of Marriage and Family Therapy. Neil lives in Loudoun County with his wife and children, Max 19 and Shannon 17.

The following handouts from the meeting are available on Google Drive and on our LEAP wiki and will soon be available on the LCPS LEAP website. Google Drive - [https://drive.google.com/…/fol…/0B9dkdgKHAu2remg3d3V6aUg0ZVk](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B9dkdgKHAu2remg3d3V6aUg0ZVk)

LEAP wiki -

1. Neil McNerney's presentation on Student Mental Health and Return to School and related handouts, including a flyer about the video contest
2. Information about National Institutes for Mental Health free treatment options and research studies, including depression, ADHD, anxiety and mood disorder.
3. A You are not Alone e-book for depressed teens and a link to the study for which they are actively recruiting depressed teams: [https://www.nimh.nih.gov/…/publ…/teen-depression/index.shtml](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression/index.shtml)

8:00 pm - 8:45 pm **Improving LEAP Youth Mental Health and Suicide Prevention “Return to Learn” Recommendations**

* Delegates formed a sub-committee to expand on the original set of recommendations that LEAP proposed to LCPS and the school board during September National Suicide Prevention week. Click here to see recommendations. They will work with the medical health community and other community stakeholders to make recommendations for moving forward. They will present their recommendations to us in the spring.
* Important take-away – there is no LCPS policy for supporting students who return to school after absences related to a mental illness or trauma. LCPS has no guidance about what to expect because every student is different and every principal decides what is implemented at their school.
* Delegates want a baseline policy even if includes general information. These mental health crises are very difficult times for families and any information that can be provided to us now – before we encounter a crisis – will help us learn more and feel more secure that some kind of plan will happen.

8:45 pm - 9 pm **Closing**

* Delegates Registration and Dues. If you have not submitted your delegate names or paid your dues, you are welcome to bring your registration and check to a meeting, or send them to the Treasurer. A copy of the registration form is available on the LEAP website.
* **Additional 2017-18 Meeting Topics requested by delegates:**
  + Secondary Grading Policy
  + Resources available in our schools (ROTC, etc)
  + Easing the elementary, middle to high school transition
  + Foreign language options and programs in the curriculum (what about elementary level)
  + School choice
  + BYOT Initiative
  + Supplemental school funding opportunities
  + Gifted programming/special education programming
  + Non-voted topics that were mentioned (in line with previous discussions):
  + Teacher/Parent/Administrator Dialogues
  + Community Resources/Organizations (tutoring, after-school programming)

**ABOUT THE ALLIANCE**

LEAP is a non-partisan network that promotes interaction between parents, students, teachers, school board members and the LCPS administration. LEAP provides a collaborative forum for identifying and exploring topics that are most important to our school district.

Each school can have two delegates who identify meeting topics, form committees, introduce recommendations for improvements, obtain the latest information on a range of issues, execute projects and programs, and introduce and vote on Alliance motions. We believe that our alliance can exceed what any of us can accomplish on our own.

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month during the school year. Admission is free and all parents and members of the community are welcome.